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ABSTRACT

Opinions about students' rights were elicited from students attending an inner-city alternative high school, using a questionnaire. The questions focused on opinions on (1) freedom of speech, (2) due process, (3) suspension and corporal punishment, (4) vague regulations, (5) dress codes, and (6) students' governance of fellow students. Findings, reported by sex and grade level, indicate that students responded to four of the six general questions. In summary, they favored limited freedom of speech, due process for students, school dress codes, and student governance. Analysis of the findings revealed that the majority of the students wanted to learn in a structured, teacher administration oriented school setting. Students additionally wanted to play an active role in the decision making processes and to have a voice in the educational process. Tables of data are appended. (MK)

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THE OPINIONS OF INNER-CITY ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TOWARD STUDENT RIGHTS

by

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BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The nations's educational system in recent years experienced much violence which stemmed from man's inner drive to achieve full recognition of his rights and freedom. During the early 1960's, this movement was lead by civil rights activitists set on gaining equality for minority groups in the United States, particularly black Americans. Many college and university students involved with these crusades spent their vacation helping to register black voters in the deep South and elsewhere. This movement gave college students the incentive to organize among themselves attempts to acquire certain rights and freedom at their respective institutions.

In 1964, the cradle of the student activist movement was the University of California at Berkeley where the free speech movement catapulted organized student protest into the national limelight. By the end of the decade, the movement had spread across the nation's college campuses. The ideals of this movement inevitably were passed down to younger students in elementary and secondary schools who espoused the ideals of their older peers. The student's right movement was influenced by college protestors and pertinent judicial decisions were rendered by state and federal courts between 1960 and 1970. These court decisions have given students more power over their lives and the schools less.

The Burnside v. Byars decision gave students freedom of speech, including the right to publish and distribute student newspapers on school premises.[1] The court decision of Goss v. Lopez and Wood v. Strickland, respectively, gave students the right to due process in cases of suspensions and the right to sue school board members for damages if students' rights were knowlingly violated.[2, 3] Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District permitted students to wear arm bands, buttons and other symbols of political expression.[4] The Buckley Law gave students the right of privacy of their school records.[5] These decisions and others gave students the same basic constitutional rights as adults. Students no longer lose their right to due process, freedom of speech and privacy because they are attending school.

School administrators, teachers, parents and the community have begun to review school/student relationship policies in relation to the law. School boards have published guidelines and handbooks on student rights

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1. Burnside v. Byars (363 F 2nd 7741) Mississippi 1969.

2. Goss v. Lopez (95, U.S. Supreme Court, 729), 1975.

3. Goss v. Lopez (95, U.S. Supreme Court, 729), 1975.

4. Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District (393, U.S. Supreme Court, 503) 1969.

5. Buckley Law (Public Law 90-247), 1975.

and responsibilities.[6] These books and guidelines were published so that everyone would be aware of students' rights, and teachers along with administrators would be careful not to violate students' rights.

The concept that students must be given the same legal rights as adults is puzzling to teachers, parents, administrators and students alike. A survey of Dayton, Ohio parents showed that the majority supported students' privacy, due process and freedom of speech.[7] A study of high school students' perception of teachers' violations of their rights revealed the majority of students felt teachers had little respect for their opinions; the school had a repressive school code, denied students due process, restricted use of restrooms, and violated their right of free expression.[8]

Significance of Study

A review of the literature revealed several studies on public school students' perception of student rights. These studies were completed in

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6. Dodson, R.C., "Students Rights and Due Process" in Urban, Social and Educational Issues (ed. L. Golubchick and B. Persky), Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1976., pp. 71-75.

7. Ballatin, H.P., Ballatine, J.H. and L. Cargan, "Should Students Have Rights? Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 58, No. 2, October 1976, pp. 207-208.

8. Buxton, T. H. and K. W. Prichard, Student Perceptions of Teacher Violation of Human Rights," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 55, No. 1 September 1973, pp. 325-329.

the early seventies and dealt with court cases beginning from the civil rights movement through the seventies. There were not studies dealing with opinions of alternative school students toward student rights. This investigation will survey the opinions of alternative high school students. Also, the self-devised instrument used in the study will be developed and refined. Research on this issue would be of educational importance to the alternative high school administrator where students' rights may have been violated because administrators may not be aware of students' attitudes. This research would also be of value to parents, teachers, administrators, the general population and especially students because it will make everyone aware that students are entitled to the same constitutional rights as adults.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine alternative high school students' opinions on students' rights.

General Questions to be Studied

This study will attempt to secure opinions on the following general questions:

Question 1. What are students' opinions of students' freedom of speech?

Question 2. What are students' opinions of the due process of law for students?

Question 3. What are students' opinions of student suspension and corporal punishment?

Question 4. What are students' opinions of vague regulations?

Question 5. What are students' opinions of student dress codes?

Question 6. What are students' opinions of students' governance of fellow students?

Procedure of the Study

Population and Sample

The population for this study will include 300 high school students (Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors) enrolled in English and Math classes at Garfield Alternative High School. The sample will include 100 students (50 males and 50 females). Students will be chosen by available selection. Although Garfield Alternative High School is located in a lower class black community, its population is made up of lower and middle class youths.

Method of Data Collection

The sample of 100 students will be administered the questionnaire by the researcher in her classes. The questionnaire was pilot tested on ten students to enhance its validity, reliability and understanding on part of the students.

Instrument

A thirty-nine (39) item objective-type questionnaire, designed by the author to provide responses to the six general questions, will be administered to the sample included in the study. One open-ended question was included to obtain additional data regarding the students' opinions on student rights. Students will be instructed not to write their names on the questionnaire.

Definition of Terms

Alternative Students	-Students who have chosen to attend a school other than a regular public or parochial school.
Students' Rights	-Freedom of student, privileges of students.
Due Process of Law	-Defined by the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment of the Constitution.
Student Governance	-Students through student councils and meetings will develop rules and guidelines.
Students' Opinions Toward Student Rights	-Evidenced by scores on the self-devised questionnaire.

Limitations of Study

The findings will be limited to the intact selected sample. The questionnaire may have limitations in terms of reliability and validity.

Students may not answer questions honestly. Students may not understand what some of the questions mean.

Assumption of Study

It is assumed, after pilot testing, that the questionnaire has validity and reliability. It is further assumed that the participants will understand the questionnaire and complete it with accuracy and sincerity. (The researcher will read each question with the students.)

Treatment of Data

The data will be tabulated in terms of "yes" "no" and "don't know" responses. The number of responses will be analyzed in terms of the percentage of responses to each question and in accordance with the six categories of general questions. The open-ended question will be analyzed to show the quantification of responses and the general trend of responses. The data will be analyzed in terms of the independent variable of sex and grade level. The chi-square will be used at the .05 level of confidence to determine the statistical significance of the responses.

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The puspose of this study is to determine alternative high school students' opinions of student rights. The data were analyzed according to the six general questions and the independent variables of grade level, sex and total responses. The data were tabulated in terms of percentages. Chi square was employed to determine whether the responses were statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

The responses to the first general question on the issue of freedom of speech in the classroom are tabulated in Table I. The responses show that the majority of the males (62%) and majority of females (80%) felt that the students should not be allowed to speak in class whenever they wish. The responses in terms of grade level show that the majority of ninth graders (85%), tenth graders (60%), eleventh graders (76%) and twelfth graders (80%) felt that the students should not be able to speak in class whenever they wish. Seventy-one percent of the total sample rejected freedom of speech in the classroom.

The majority of males (82%) and females (88%) felt that students should not be allowed to use abusive language in the classroom. The majority of the ninth graders (100%), tenth graders (92%), eleventh graders (68%) and twelfth graders (93%) felt that they should not be allowed to use abusive language in the classroom. The responses were statistically significant (.05 level). Also 85 percent of the total sample concurred.

Sixty- three percent of all students and the majority of both males (56%) and females (70%) felt that the students should not be allowed to use informal slang and non-standard English. Responses also showed that the majority of the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth graders felt that students should not be allowed to use informal slang in the classroom. The majority of ninth (65%), tenth (56%) and twelfth graders (50%) felt that students should be allowed to use non-standard English in the classroom. The findings show that the majority of males (52%) believe that the students should have the right to argue with the teacher. There wasn't a significant difference between the female response to this question. The responses according to grade level showed no significant difference in tenth graders (52%) except for the majority of twelfth graders (70%) who indicated they should have the right to argue with the teacher.

Eighty-four percent of the males and 86 percent of the females stated that they should have the right to question classroom rules. The majority of ninth graders (85%), tenth graders (88%), eleventh graders (76%) and twelfth graders (100%) also believed the students should have the right to question classroom rules as did 85 percent of the total sample.

The results show that males (40%-26%) and females (30%) were divided on the issue of prayers in the classroom. Although the forty-

five percent of ninth graders, forty percent of eleventh graders and forty-three percent of twelfth graders showed that they were in favor of prayers in the classroom, only the tenth graders (52%) had a significant majority rejecting students' prayers in the classroom. The total group was divided on the issue.

The data showed that the majority of males (64%) and females (74%) indicated students should have the right to hold meetings in school. The responses of the majority of ninth graders (70%), tenth graders (44%), eleventh graders (76%), and twelfth graders (90%) showed that they should have the right to hold meetings in school. Seventy-four percent of all students favored meetings in school.

A significant number of males (68%) and females (52%) indicated that students should be allowed to publish a school newspaper that criticizes the school administration. The majority of tenth (68%) and twelfth (73%) graders showed that students should be allowed to publish a school newspaper that criticizes the school administration. The responses of the ninth graders showed that there was no significant difference in yes and no responses. However, 52 percent of the total group did not favor public criticism of the school administration.

The second general question was concerned with students' opinions of due process and is tabulated in Table II with six specific questions on the same issue. The responses show that the majority of the

males (58%) and females (58%) felt students' records, I.Q. and achievement test scores should be kept private for them and their parents (except for teacher, administrators and counselors). The responses show that the majority of ninth (50%) and 52 percent of tenth graders felt records, etc. should not be kept private. The responses of the tenth graders show that there was no significant difference in responses. The majority of the eleventh graders (68%) and twelfth graders (70%) felt records and scores should be kept private. Their responses were statistically significant. Fifty-eight percent of the total sample concurred.

The responses showed that the majority of males (70%) and females (68%) and ninth (55%), tenth (72%), eleventh (60%) and twelfth graders (87%) felt they should have the right to procedural due process. Sixty-nine percent of the total sample supported due process. The results were significant.

The responses showed that the majority of males (76%) and females (60%) and tenth (68%), eleventh (68%) and twelfth (90%) felt that if a student was called before the principal for misconduct, he should be allowed to have his parents, guardian, or lawyer present. The responses showed no significant difference of the opinions of the ninth graders. However 68 percent of the total sample stated students should be represented.

The responses showed that the majority of the males (68%) and females ((62%) and ninth (50%), tenth (60%), eleventh (60%) and twelfth graders (90%) show that they felt students should be allowed the right to appeal judgment against them, as did 66 percent of the total sample. The responses were statistically significant.

The responses showed that the majority of males (60%) and females (66%) and ninth (50%), tenth (60%) and eleventh graders (76%) indicated that students hould not be threatened or intimidated to testify against themselves. Whereas, 80 percent of twelfth graders felt students should be threatened or intimated to testify against themselves. On the other hand, 48 percent opposed and 32 percent of the total sample favored intimidation.

The responses showed that the majority of males (80%) and females (82%) and ninth (75%), tenth (88%) and eleventh (80%) and twelfth graders (87%) stated that if a student is accused of misconduct he should be allowed to question his accusers. Eighty-two percent of the total sample concurred. The findings were statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

The fourth general question regarding students responses on vague regulations with the three specific questions are tabulated on Table IV.

The findings indicated that the majority of males (78%) and females (75%), ninth (70%), tenth (76%), eleventh (60%) and twelfth graders (77%) believe schools should not have the right of reasonable search of students. This was conferred by 52 percent of all students. The results were statistically significant (.05 level).

The data illustrated that the majority of males (78%) and females (64%) and ninth (70%), tenth (72%) and twelfth graders (60%) felt the school should not have the right to seize students' property if it is reasonable. The majority (55%) of the total group disagreed. All responses were signficant (.05 level).

The results show that a significant majority of males (46%) and females (48%) and eleventh (40%) and twelfth graders (63%) thought that smoking should be prohibited if specified that it is against the best interest of the school, while the majority of the ninth graders (40%) felt that smoking should not be prohibited even is specified that it is against the best interest of the school. Tenth graders were divided on the issue. Also 50 percent of the total sample rejected smoking in school.

The third general question dealt with students' responses concerning students' misconduct and disciplinary action in school and the eight specific questions relating to this issue are tabulated in Table III.

The data illustrated the majority of males (54%) and females (60%) and ninth (45%), tenth (52%), eleventh (56%) and twelfth graders (70%) believed students should be suspended from school if found guilty of misconduct. Fifty-six percent of the total group agreed. The responses were statistically significant.

The results indicated that the majority of males (52%) and females (60%) and ninth (55%), tenth (68%), and twelfth graders (70%) believed physical punishment should not be used for students who have serious behavior problems, as did 58 percent of all students. However, no significant difference in responses were found with eleventh graders.

The findings showed that the majority of males (74%) and females (86%) and ninth (75%), tenth (88%), eleventh (80%) and twelfth graders (83%) stated that students who purposefully destroy school property should be expelled from school, and the majority of ninth (60%), tenth (52%), eleventh (52%) and twelfth graders (57%) supported the idea that school suspension should be recorded on the students records. Also 54 percent of both males and females and 79 percent of the total sample supported the recording of students misconduct in school. The data were statistically signficant.

The responses showed that the majority of the males (78%) and females (76%) and ninth (80%), tenth (80%) and eleventh graders (60%) felt the principal should not have the authority to retain a student's diploma

because of his or her attitude or misconduct. The majority of twelfth graders (93%) felt that the principal should be able to withhold a student's diploma for misconduct and 55 percent stated the principal could retain a student.

The findings demonstrated that the majority of males (64%) and females (84%) and ninth (85%), tenth (84%), eleventh (60%) and twelfth graders (80%) advocate that students who use drugs and alcohol in school should be expelled from school as did 65 percent of all students. The majority of males (72%) and females (86%) and ninth (85%), tenth (96%), eleventh graders (56%) and twelfth graders (80%) favored the policy that students who sell drugs in school should be expelled from school. Seventy-eight percent of the total sample also favored expulsion. The findings were significant.

The data showed that the majority of males (46%) and females (62%) and tenth graders (72%), eleventh (52%) and twelfth graders (50%) advocate that if a student continually disrupts the classroom, he should be expelled from school. The responses of the ninth graders showed no significant difference in responses. However, 56 percent of all students favored school expulsion for class or school disruptions. The responses were statistically significant.

The fifth general question concerning responses of students regarding dress codes and the five specific questions and responses on the same

topic are presented in Table V.

The responses showed that the majority of males (54%) felt young men should be allowed to wear long hair, long afros, braids or hair rollers to school. The majority of females (54%) disagreed. The majority of eleventh (60%) graders favored young men wearing long hair, etc., while the majority of tenth graders (52%) disfavored long hair, etc. The responses showed no signficant difference in the responses of ninth and twelfth graders. The total group was divided on the issue.

On the issue of hair rollers, the majority of males (54%) felt young ladies could wear them. However, the majority of females (52%) felt young ladies should not beallowed to wear hair rollers to school, as did the majority of eleventh graders (60%). Date indicated no significant difference in the responses of ninth, tenth and twelfth graders and the total sample.

Most of the males (46%) and females (86%) and ninth (65%), tenth (84%), eleventh (64%) and twelfth (70%) thought young men should not be allowed to wear head bands, hats or rags in school. The total responses (67%) of the sample also disfavored the wearing of head bands, etc.

The data indicated that the majority of males (50%) favored and the majority of females (82%) disfavored females wearing open skirts, extreme miniskirts or hot pants to school, as did the majority (51%) of the total student body. In addition, 50 percent of ninth, 76 percent of

tenth, 48 percent of eleventh and 57 percent of twelfth graders rejected open and miniskirts, etc. The results were statistically significant.

The findings showed that the majority of males (64%) and females (80%) and the majority of ninth (55%), tenth (84%), eleventh (56%) and twelfth (87%) felt that the school should have the right to make students keep a standard of cleanliness, and 69 percent of all students also favored this policy. Findings were significant (.05 level).

The sixth general question dealt with students' opinions of student governance. There are six specific questions that respond to this topic which are tabulated in Table VI.

Students' responses demonstrated that the majority of males (70%) and females (82%) and ninth graders (60%), tenth graders (76%), eleventh graders (80%), and twelfth graders (83%) felt students should not be forced to attend school ceremonies and activities. Seventy-six percent of the total sample concurred. Findings were significant.

The findings showed that males (40%) and females (46%) and ninth graders (35%), eleventh graders and twelfth graders were divided on student courts being used to determine the guilt or innocence of fellow students. Only tenth graders (60%) exhibited a statistically significant majority opinion.

On the issue of the council making school regulations concerning the conduct and governance of students, the majority of males (58%) and

females (62%) gave an affirmative response. The responses show that eleventh graders (68%) and twelfth graders (63%) felt student council should make school regulations concerning the conduct and governance of students. Ninth graders were divided on the issue. However, 52 percent of tenth graders favored the student council making regulations regarding student conduct and governance. Fifty-seven percent of all students favored student council governance.

The data indicated that the majority of males (78%) and females (70%) including ninth graders (75%), tenth graders (46%), eleventh graders (80%) and twelfth graders (87%) felt students should have the right to use school facilities within a reasonable time frame, as did 75 percent of the total sample.

On the issue of students grievance procedures being developed for students, the majority of males (56%) and only 36 percent of females gave favorable responses. The majority of tenth graders (72%) and twelfth graders (63%) felt student grievance procedures should be developed for students, while less than a majority of ninth (45%) and eleventh (48%) graders favored the issue. However, 57 percent of the total sample agreed with the development of student grievance procedures. The results were statistically signficant (.05 level).

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine and analyze the perceptions of students rights by students at the Garfield Alternative High School. A 38 item questionnaire was designed to obtain answers to the following six general questions:

1. What are students' opinions of students' freedom of speech?
2. What are students' opinions of the due process of law for students?
3. What are students' opinions of students suspension and corporal punishment?
4. What are students' opinions of vague regulations?
5. What are students' opinions of student dress code?
6. What are students' opinions of students' governance of fellow students?

Summary

Results of the findings varied. When responding to the question, "What are students' opinions of students' freedom of speech" findings showed that 71 percent of the total sample felt they should not have freedom of speech in the classroom. Eleven percent of the total population was undecided.

In response to the questions regarding due process of law, 58 percent of the total population favored privacy of school records and test scores, while 34 percent was not in favor of privacy of records.

The majority of eleventh (68%) and twelfth graders (70%) favored privacy of school records while the majority of ninth graders (50%) did not favor privacy of records and the tenth graders findings showed no significant difference. The responses of the seniors and juniors could be contributed to their level of maturity; 3 to 4 years of high school experience and knowledge of the importance of access to records while also understanding the value of privacy of their school records and test scores. Similar positive responses were also given to the question, "Should students have the right to procedural due process?" The seniors in particular (87%), then the sophomores (72%), the juniors (60%) and the freshmen (55%) favored the right to procedural due process.

The question that received the greatest positive response was "Should a student who is accused of misconduct be allowed to question his accusers?" The highest response to this question was the vast majority of the tenth graders (88%), the twelfth graders (87%), the eleventh graders (80%) and the ninth graders (75%). The findings showed 51 percent of the total population was in favor of a dress code. Twenty-nine percent were not in favor and 20 percent were ambivalent. The responses were different when questions were being specifically addressed to hair style. Surprisingly, the females, 54 percent, responded positively to the question pertaining to men being allowed to wear long hair, braids, and rollers to school. On the other hand,

54 percent of the males were not in agreement. Another outstanding response was to the question, "Should students keep a standard of cleanliness?" Sixty-nine percent of the total population was in favor of this standard.

Students were not in agreement with the school having the right of search and seizure. The percent of the majority of males and females not in favor was 78%. The individual grade levels starting with freshmen, range from 70% to 76% to 60% and last the seniors 77%. They also disfavored corporal punishment in the school, more twelfth graders (70%) than tenth graders (68%) and ninth graders (55%). The eleventh graders responses showed that half were in favor and the other half were not in favor or corporal punishment in the school.

Finally, the question "Should students have a voice in students' governance of fellow students?" Twelfth graders (63%) and eleventh graders (68%) agreed strongly that students should participate in student governance. A vast majority of the population was not in favor of students being forced to attend school activities. More females (82%) than males (70%) were not in favor of being forced to attend school activities. This was probably due to the fact that some students work, some were teenage parents and had responsibilities to the home. Another question that received positive response was "Should student grievance procedures be developed for students?" The males (56%) over the females (36%) were in favor of grievance procedures being developed for students.

The findings show that students at all grade levels, males as well as females, responded to four out of the six general questions. In summary, they favored: 1) limited freedom of speech 2) due process for students, 3) school dress code, and 4) student governance.

Conclusions

Analysis of the findings revealed that the majority of the students wanted to learn in a structured teacher administration oriented school setting. Even with the constant changes in our society today and the liberal minds of youths, students want to be involved with decision making processes and want to have an active voice in what they learn, how and by whom.

Many seniors and juniors were concerned with the question, "Should students have the right to argue with their teachers?" In discussing this question, students revealed that they were not trying to show disrespect toward their teachers, but felt that teachers can sometimes be wrong. Research indicated that because of the maturity level of the students, they did not want freedom of speech but rather an opportunity to voice opinions and ask questions that might aid them in understanding a lesson or a school or classroom policy. Some students felt that when a teacher and administrator did not hear their opinions, they were being treated unfairly.

Another controversial issue was the dress code issue. Students agreed that there should be a code, but they also felt the mode of student attire would not affect learning. The students felt that hair styles of males and females should be according to their taste, however, the majority, 67 percent, were not in agreement with men wearing head bands, hats, headrags, etc. They were also in accordance with the school establishing a standard of cleanliness. Many teachers and administrators believe that without a dress code, students would go to the extreme and wear all manner of attire. In the case of Richard vs. Thurston (First Circuit, 1970), the ruling stated:

> We conclude that within the commodious concept of liberty, embracing freedoms great and small, it is the right to wear ones hair as he wished, we see no inherent reason why decency decorum or good conduct requires a boy to wear his hair short. We do not believe that mere unattractiveness in the eyes of some parents, teachers, or students, short of uncleanliness, can justify disciplinary action. Nor, finally does such compelled conformity to conventional standards of appearance seem a justifiable part of the educational process.

There were no studies on Alternative student perceptions of student rights. There are several related studies on public school students and suburban school students' rights. A study by Ogletree and Chambers showed that the majority of students gave conservative responses. They found the majority (60%) rejected the notion of free speech in the classroom, while 29 percent sanctioned it. However, this response was

similar to the Alternative student responses where 71 percent rejected and 18 percent agreed. Fifty-nine percent of the public school students rejected a school dress code and 84 percent desired freedom in dress and 79 percent freedom in hair styles. Research, however, showed that the alternative students were in agreement with limited dress codes and were not in favor of males wearing head bands, hats or head rags in school. Findings showed that the majority (66%) of the public school students and the majority (69%) of the Alternative students agreed that the school should establish a standard of hygiene.

Concerning student governance, 62 percent favored student councils right to make recommendations on conduct. However, only 36 percent favored and 48 percent rejected a student court to rule on the innocence or guilt of students violate school regulations. Fifty-seven percent of the Alternative students were in favor of students councils making recommendations on conduct. However, only 40 percent favored and 38 percent rejected a student court ruling on the innocence or guilt of students who violated school regulations.

The majority, 63 percent, of the public school students and the majority, 58 percent, of the Alternative students believed that students' records and test scored should be kept private for him, his parents and school staff.

Another comparative study conducted by Imber on suburban students responses and inner city students responses to a student right questionnaire was related closely to my study on Alternative school perceptions of students' rights. The responses that were closely related to the Alternative students were those of the inner city student. On freedom of speech, 59 percent of the inner city students were not in favor while 71 percent of the Alternative students were in favor. On the question should students be allowed to publish a school newspaper that criticizes the school administration, teachers and the school system, the response of the majority, 79 percent of suburban students, was closely related to the opinions of the Alternative male students (68%) who were in favor. The majority (52%) of the total population of the Alternative students, like the majority (79%) of the suburban students were not in favor.

On the issue of search and seizure, the inner city students were in favor (56%), while the suburban students (61%), (72%) and the Alternative students (52%), (55%) in my study were strictly against search and seizure.

On the subject of dress code, the finding showed that the inner city (59%) as well as the suburban (80%) school were not in favor of the school establishing a dress code. On the other hand, the Alternative school was in favor of the school establishing a limited dress code to prevent immodest dress that may cause disruption from their education.

All three students showed that students were interested in the school having the right to establish a standard of hygiene.

On student governance, 62 percent favored a student council to make recommendations on conduct. However, only 36 percent favored and 48 percent rejected a student court to rule on the innocence or guilt of students who violated school regulations.

The majority of students (63%) believed that students' records and test scores should be kept private for him, his parents and school staff. Thirty-three percent disagreed.

Another related study was Buxton's "Student Perceptions of Their Human Rights" which basically dealth with Southern students' opinions of rights violated by teachers and administrators. One comparative issue of dress code indicated that Southern students felt they should dress as they wish. However, the study results showed that of the students responding, 68 percent of them did not have freedom of dress.

Further findings revealed that 81 percent of Southern students thought that teacher lack of respect for student opinions was the most abused right. This issue relates closely to the question on freedom of speech where students (62%) were not in favor of freedom of speech but rather wanted an opportunity to express their opinions on various issues. Dress code and freedom of speech were the only issues that were related to Buxton's study.

The findings suggest that if the educational process is to keep pace with the changing trends of students, society, teachers and administrators will need the imput of students in the areas of: 1) curriculum offerings and requirements, 2) discipline procedures, 3) governance of student body, and 4) dress code requirements.

Implications

The results of this study implied that students were not trying to take complete control of the school, but wanted to share the responsibilities of their education. The results show that students desire a well organized and operated school, even though they would like to know why certain rulings and requirements are instituted. They would like the choice to have imput in making suggestions and expressing opinions. Students are aware of the need for restrictions on freedom of speech and dress code and the need for suspensions. On the other hand, students felt that they should have the same rights and privileges as adults in the area of due process and self-governance within reasonable limits.

Students felt they should have the right to question teachers on classroom procedures, subject matter, content, and assignments and administration on school policy. They wish to participate in their own education as it appears that this would increase motivation and commitment to learning on the part of the students.

In order to enhance student deportment, students could be given more participatory rights in the educational process. This may reduce disciplinary problems, school vandalism, tardiness, absenteeism, failures and drop-outs. It would probably establish a more conducive learning and teaching environment for students and teachers.

The findings of this study suggest the following recommendations:

1. School administrators and teachers should provide a media in the form of committees and students advisory councils for students to voice their concerns.

2. School administrators with teachers and students should develop a students rights handbook which parents, students and teachers should know and follow.

3. Classroom teachers should provide students the opportunity to ask questions and make constructive suggestions in classroom. Perhaps 30 to 15 minutes per week should be allotted for a discussion period in which school and class policies, subject-matter content and related issues would be discussed. (More time could be allotted if necessary.)

4. School administrators and teachers should meet with parents at least once a month to discuss school and student's problems and issues. Students should also be made aware of the progress on a monthly basis.

5. Students should be encouraged with a faculty advisor to organize students groups, clubs, and councils to monitor and suggest guidelines for students conduct and governance policies.

6. Students should be introduced to community issues, politics, careers through community guest speakers, field trips, newspapers, etc.

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TABLE I

RESPONSE OF STUDENTS REGARDING FREEDOM OF SPEECH

	SEX N=50				N=50		GRADE LEVEL N=20			N=25			N=25			N=30			N=100		
	M			F			9			10			11			12			TOTAL		
	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D
1. Should students be allowed to speak in class whenever they wish?	22%	*62%	16%	14%	*80%	6%	15%	*85%	0%	28%	*60%	12%	8%	*76%	16%	17%	*80%	3%	18%	*71%	11%
2. Should students be allowed to use abusive language in the classroom?	2%	*82%	16%	2%	*88%	10%	0%	*100%	0%	4%	*92%	4%		*68%	32%	3%	*93%	3%	2%	*85%	13%
3. Should students be allowed to use informal slang?	28%	*56%	16%	20%	*70%	10%	10%	*85%	5%	20%	*76%	4%	24%	*56%	20%	40%	53%	7%	25%	*63%	12%
4. Should students be allowed to speak and/or write non-standard English?	26%	*38%	36%	28%	*46%	26%	20%	*65%	15%	20%	*56%	24%	12%	*44%	44%	*50%	20%	30%	24%	*46%	30%
5. Should students have the right to argue with their teachers?	*52%	32%	16%	46%	42%	12%	45%	45%	10%	52%	44%	4%	*40%	36%	24%	*70%	27%	3%	49%	37%	14%
6. Should students have the right to question classroom rules?	*84%	2%	14%	*86%	0%	14%	*85%	5%	10%	*88%	0%	12%	*76%	0%	24%	*100%			*85%	8%	7%
7. Should students be allowed to publish a school newspaper that criticizes the school administration?	*68%	14%	18%	*52%	34%	14%	50%	45%	5%	*68%	28%	4%	*48%	24%	28%	*73%	17%	10%	32%	*52%	16%
8. Should students be allowed to say prayers in the classroom?	*40%	26%	34%	30%	*36%	34%	*45%	20%	35%	28%	*52%	20%	*40%	20%	40%	*43%	27%	30%	*38%	28%	34%
9. Should students be allowed to distribute underground literature?	26%	*36%	38%	14%	*56%	30%	20%	*35%	45%	12%	*76%	12%	*48%	8%	44%	30%	*37%	33%	18%	*48%	34%
10. Should students have the right to hold meetings in school?	*84%	12%	14%	*74%	12%	14%	*70%	20%	10%	*44%	28%	12%	*76%	4%	20%	*90%	3%	7%	*74%	12%	14%

*Significant at the .05 Level

TABLE II

RESPONSES OF STUDENTS REGARDING DUE PROCESS OF LAW

	SEX N=50			SEX N=50			GRADE LEVEL 9 N=20			GRADE LEVEL 10 N=25			GRADE LEVEL 11 N=25			GRADE LEVEL 12 N=30			TOTAL N=100		
	M			F																	
	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D
11. Should students' records, I.Q. and achievement test scores be kept private for him and his parents (except for teachers, administrators and counselors)?	* 58%	32%	10%	* 58%	36%	6%	35%	* 50%	15%	48%	52%	0%	* 68%	16%	16%	* 70%	30%	0%	* 58%	34%	8%
12. Should students have the right to procedural due process, including notice of hearing, presence of legal counsel, cross-examination or confrontation of witnesses, and freedom from self-incrimination?	* 70%	2%	28%	* 68%	6%	26%	* 55%	10%	35%	* 72%	4%	24%	* 60%	4%	36%	* 87%	3%	10%	* 69%	4%	27%
13. If a student is called before the principal for misconduct, should he be allowed to have his parent guardian or lawyer present?	* 76%	10%	14%	* 60%	26%	14%	40%	40%	20%	* 68%	24%	8%	* 68%	8%	24%	* 90%	10%	0%	* 68%	18%	14%
14. Should students be allowed the right to appeal judgement against them?	* 68%	10%	8%	* 62%	12%	26%	* 50%	20%	30%	* 60%	24%	16%	* 60%	8%	32%	* 90%	0%	10%	* 66%	11%	23%
15. Should students be threatened or intimated to testify against themselves?	16%	* 60%	24%	18%	* 66%	16%	20%	* 50%	30%	24%	* 60%	16%	16%	* 60%	24%	* 80%	13%	7%	32%	* 48%	20%
16. Should a student who is accused of misconduct be allowed to question his accusers?	* 80%	4%	16%	* 82%	8%	10%	* 75%	10%	15%	* 88%	8%	4%	* 80%	4%	16%	* 87%	3%	10%	* 82%	5%	13%

*Significant at the .05 Level

TABLE III

RESPONSES OF STUDENTS REGARDING MISCONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

	SEX						GRADE LEVEL												TOTAL		
	N=50			N=50			N=20			N=25			N=25			N=30			N=100		
	M			F			9			10			11			12					
	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D
17. Should students be suspended from school if found guilty of misconduct?	*54%	26%	20%	*60%	28%	12%	*45%	30%	25%	*52%	36%	12%	*56%	24%	20%	*70%	23%	7%	*56%	29%	15%
18. Should physical punishment be used for students who have serious behavior problems?	26%	*52%	18%	32%	*60%	8%	30%	*55%	15%	28%	*68%	4%	40%	40%	20%	23%	*70%	7%	29%	*58%	13%
19. Should students who purposefully destroy school property be expelled from school?	*74%	12%	14%	*86%	2%	12%	*75%	20%	5%	*88%	0%	12%	*80%	[illegible]%	16%	*83%	10%	7%	*80%	7%	13%
20. Should school suspension be recorded on the students' record?	*54%	32%	14%	*54%	36%	10%	*60%	30%	10%	*52%	36%	12%	*52%	32%	16%	*57%	40%	3%	*79%	7%	14%
21. Should the principal have the authority to keep a students' diploma because of a students' attitude or misconduct?	10%	*78%	12%	18%	*76%	6%	10%	*80%	10%	20%	*80%	0%	24%	*60%	16%	*93%	3%	3%	*55%	33%	12%
22. Should students who use drugs and alcohol in school be expelled from school?	*64%	16%	20%	*84%	8%	8%	*85%	0%	15%	*84%	12%	4%	*60%	20%	20%	*80%	13%	7%	*65%	21%	14%
23. Should students who sell drugs in school be expelled from school?	*72%	8%	10%	*86%	6%	8%	*85%	10%	5%	*96%	0%	4%	*56%	12%	32%	*80%	7%	13%	*78%	13%	9%
24. Should students who continually disrupt the classroom be expelled from school?	*46%	30%	24%	*62%	28%	10%	45%	40%	15%	*72%	28%	0%	*52%	20%	28%	*50%	37%	13%	*56%	27%	16%

*Significant at the .05 Level

TABLE IV

STUDENT RESPONSES REGARDING VAGUE REGUALTIONS

	SEX						GRADE LEVEL														
	N=50			N=50			N=20			N=25			N=25			N=30			N=100		
	M			F			9			10			11			12			TOTAL		
	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D
25. Should the school have the right of reasonable search of students?	16%	*78%	18%	10%	*74%	16%	10%	*70%	20%	20%	*76%	4%	12%	*60%	28%	13%	*77%	10%	30%	*52%	18%
26. Should the school have the right to seize students property if it is reasonable?	14%	*78%	18%	22%	*64%	14%	20%	*70%	10%	20%	*72%	8%	4%	*72%	24%	27%	*60%	13%	29%	*55%	16%
27. Should smoking be prohibited if specified that it is against the best interest of the school?	*46%	32%	22%	*48%	32%	20%	35%	*40%	25%	48%	44%	8%	*40%	36%	24%	*63%	20%	17%	*50%	29%	21%

*Significant at the .05 Level

TABLE V

RESPONSES OF STUDENTS REGARDING DRESS CODE

	SEX						GRADE LEVEL														
	N=50			N=50			N=20			N=25			N=25			N=30			N=100		
	M			F			9			10			11			12			TOTAL		
	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D
28. Should young men be allowed to wear long hair, long afros, braids or hair rollers to school?	* 54%	16%	30%	28%	* 54%	18%	40%	45%	15%	28%	* 52%	20%	* 56%	16%	28%	* 43%	37%	20%	* 41%	34%	25%
29. Should young ladies be allowed to wear long afros or hair rollers to school?	* 54%	28%	18%	36%	* 52%	12%	40%	45%	15%	40%	56%	4%	* 60%	20%	20%	47%	43%	10%	46%	40%	14%
30. Should young men be allowed to wear head bands, hats or rags in school?	20%	* 86%	24%	8%	* 86%	12%	20%	* 65%	15%	12%	* 84%	4%	12%	* 64%	24%	23%	* 70%	7%	17%	* 67%	16%
31. Should students be allowed to wear open shirts, extreme miniskirts or hot paints to school?	* 50%	30%	20%	4%	* 82%	14%	35%	* 50%	15%	8%	* 76%	16%	32%	* 48%	20%	23%	* 57%	20%	29%	* 51%	20%
32. Should the school have the right to make students keep a standard of cleanliness? (personal hygiene)	* 64%	16%	24%	* 80%	6%	14%	* 55%	15%	30%	* 84%	8%	8%	* 56%	12%	32%	* 87%	10%	3%	* 69%	10%	21%

*Significant at the .05 Level

TABLE VI

RESPONSES OF STUDENTS REGARDING STUDENT GOVERNANCE

	SEX						GRADE LEVEL												TOTAL		
	N=50			N=50			N=20			N=25			N=25			N=30			N=100		
	M			F			9			10			11			12					
	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D	Y	N	D
33. Should students be forced to attend school ceremonies and activities (such as basketball games, sock hops and assemblies)?	16%	* 70%	14%	10%	* 82%	8%	25%	* 60%	15%	20%	* 76%	4%	4%	* 80%	16%	13%	* 83%	3%	13%	* 76%	11%
34. Should student courts be used to determine the guilt or innocence of a fellow student?	* 40%	34%	26%	* 46%	36%	18%	* 35%	30%	35%	* 60%	36%	4%	36%	36%	28%	43%	40%	17%	* 40%	38%	22%
35. Should students be forced to go to activities that promote academic refinement? (such as operas, plays)	30%	* 48%	22%	28%	* 88%	16%	40%	40%	20%	12%	* 72%	16%	32%	* 52%	16%	30%	* 60%	10%	28%	* 56%	16%
36. Should the student council make school regulations concerning the conduct and governance of students?	* 58%	18%	24%	* 62%	20%	18%	* 45%	15%	40%	40%	* 52%	8%	* 68%	8%	24%	* 63%	17%	20%	* 57%	20%	23%
37. Should students have the right to use school facilities within a reasonable time frame (for recreation & student meetings)?	* 78%	6%	16%	* 70%	14%	16%	* 75%	5%	20%	* 64%	24%	12%	* 80%	4%	16%	* 87%	3%	10%	* 74%	10%	16%
38. Should student grievance procedures be developed for students?	* 56%	10%	34%	* 36%	14%	30%	* 45%	20%	35%	* 72%	8%	20%	* 88%	16%	36%	* 63%	10%	27%	* 57%	12%	31%

*Significant at the .05 Level